

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MEXICO 04104 01 OF 02 102008Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00 SNM-05 TRSE-00 USIA-06
NSC-05 OES-07 OMB-01 AGRE-00 SS-15 AID-05 EB-08
/090 W
-----060457 102155Z /63

R 101934Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8854

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 04104

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, MX
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS - PRECISELY LOCATING ILLICIT CROPS

1. SUMMARY: BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH MAPPING PROJECT, EMBASSY SUGGESTS WE CONSIDER ANOTHER APPROACH TO REPORTING LOCATION OF ILLICIT CROPS WHICH WOULD AT LEAST COMPLEMENT, AND POSSIBLY SUBSTITUTE FOR, USE OF MAPS. EMBASSY REQUESTS EARLY VISIT BY AN INDIVIDUAL FULLY QUALIFIED IN USE OF LORAN. END SUMMARY.

2. WE NOW HAVE UNDER CONSIDERATION TWO SEPARATE BUT RELATED PROJECTS TO ASSIST IN LOCATING ILLICIT CROPS WITH PRECISION. THE FIRST, A REMOTE SENSING SYSTEM NOW BEING CONSIDERED BY THE GOM AND WHICH WOULD COST UPWARDS OF 45 MILLION, WOULD PROVIDE COMPUTER-GENERATED "MAPS" SHOWING THE LOCATIONS OF CROPS, TOGETHER WITH A COMPUTER LISTING OF EACH FIELD, ITS ESTIMATED SIZE, AND ITS COORDINATES. THE SECOND PROJECT, ESTIMATED AT \$2 MILLION, WOULD SPEED UP THE PRODUCTION OF 1:50,000 MAPS. DATA GENERATED BY THE REMOTE SENSING SYSTEM WOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO THESE MAPS AND USED BY HELICOPTER TEAMS TO LOCATE THE FIELD AND SPRAY IT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MEXICO 04104 01 OF 02 102008Z

3. BECAUSE WE ARE SO USED TO THINKING IN TERMS OF THE FORMER MULTISPECTRAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SYSTEM (MOPSS), IN WHICH SUSPECT FIELD LOCATIONS WERE TRANSFERRED FROM THE MOPSS VIEWER TO PHOTOMOSAICS, WE MAY BE CARRYING AN ARCHAIC PROCEDURE INTO THE NEW REMOTE SENSING SYSTEM, TOGETHER WITH ALL OF THE SHORTFALLS OF THE OLD PROCEDURE. THE MOPSS SYSTEM, AND THE NEW REMOTE SENSING SYSTEM IN

THE WAY IT IS NOW PERCEIVED INTRODUCED TWO TYPES OF ERROR: (A) IN TRANSFERRING A PARTICULAR FIELD LOCATION FROM THE MOPSS VIEWER OR A COMPUTER PRINTOUT, ITSELF A TIME-CONSUMING PROCESS, THE TECHNICIAN CAN POSITION THE FIELD ON THE WRONG SPOT ON THE MAP; AND (B) THE SUPPORT HELICOPTER PILOT MAY MISREAD THE MAP WHILE DIRECTING A SPRAY MISSION AND REPORT THAT HE IS OVER ONE LOCATION WHEN, IN FACT, HE MAY BE SEVERAL MILES AWAY.

4. IN THE NEW SYSTEM, ERRORS OF THE FIRST TYPE CAN BE MINIMIZED BY PRODUCING THE COMPUTER-GENERATED "MAPS" AT THE SAME SCALE AS THE MAPS PILOTS WILL USE, PERMITTING EASY TRANSFER OF FIELD LOCATIONS BY OVERLAYING THE MAPS. HOWEVER, ERRORS OF THE SECOND TYPE WOULD REMAIN POSSIBLE, AND IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT A SPRAY TEAM COULD DESTROY ONE FIELD, BUT REPORT THAT IT DESTROYED ANOTHER BECAUSE IT MISREAD ITS POSITION. SUBSEQUENT VERIFICATION FLIGHTS WOULD HAVE TO EXPLAIN WHY A FIELD, REPORTED DESTROYED, WAS STILL ALIVE. (COMMENT: THE FREQUENT INCOMPATIBILITY OF DETECTION, SPRAY, AND VERIFICATION REPORTS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PROBLEM WHOSE MAGNITUDE ESCAPES MEANINGFUL ESTIMATION. IT IS THIS UNKNOWN MARGIN OF ERROR THAT WE HAVE CONTINUALLY, AND UNSUCCESSFULLY, ATTEMPTED TO MINIMIZE.)

5. IF WE DROP THE MOPSS APPROACH, AND TURN FROM MAPS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MEXICO 04104 01 OF 02 102008Z

TO ELECTRONIC MEANS OF DETERMINING POSITION, GREATER PRECISION SHOULD BE POSSIBLE. SINCE THE REMOTE SENSING AIRCRAFT WILL CARRY A POSITION-REPORTING SYSTEM, WE SUGGEST THAT WE SERIOUSLY CONSIDER PUTTING SIMILAR POSITION-REPORTING SYSTEMS ON THE SUPPORT HELICOPTERS THAT ACCOMPANY THE SPRAY HELICOPTERS.

6. IF THIS APPROACH IS FEASIBLE, THE IMPORTANCE OF MAPS WOULD BE GREATLY REDUCED, PERMITTING US TO DEVELOP A MORE ACCURATE AND RELIABLE SYSTEM AT A COST WHICH MAY EVEN BE LESS THAN WHAT WE INTENDED TO COMMIT TO MAP PRODUCTION. SPRAY FLEETS, INSTEAD OF CARRYING MAPS TO WHICH FIELD LOCATIONS HAD BEEN TRANSFERRED, WOULD CARRY ONLY THE COMPUTER PRINTOUT OF FIELD COORDINATES. THE SUPPORT SHIP, USING A PRECISION POSITION-REPORTING SYSTEM, WOULD NAVIGATE FROM ONE SET OF COORDINATES TO ANOTHER AND, IF THE SYSTEM WERE ACCURATE ENOUGH, THERE COULD BE NO DOUBT ABOUT THE ACCURACY OF SPRAY REPORTS.

7. WE DO NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT EXPERTISE TO RECOMMEND A POSITION-REPORTING SYSTEM FOR THIS PURPOSE, BUT OUR TECHNICAL ADVISERS ARE FAMILIAR WITH THREE SUCH SYSTEMS

(LORAN-C, GLOBAL NAVIGATION, AND ONTRAC III). THEIR INDUSTRY CONTACTS HAVE TOLD THEM THAT, OF THE THREE, LORAN-C IS THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE IN THE TYPE APPLICATION WE HAVE TO CONSIDER, AND THAT IN MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN LORAN-C CAN BE EXPECTED TO PRODUCE ACCURACY WHICH IS CONSISTENTLY WITHIN SEVERAL HUNDRED FEET. LORAN-C DOES NOT REQUIRE PERIODIC UPDATING BY GROUND REFERENCE, A FURTHER ADVANTAGE GRANTED THE LACK OF ADEQUATE MAPS.

8. EXPERIENCE IN RECENT YEARS SUGGESTS THAT A

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MEXICO 04104 02 OF 02 102129Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00 SNM-05 TRSE-00 USIA-06
NSC-05 OES-07 OMB-01 AGRE-00 SS-15 AID-05 EB-08
/090 W
-----060841 102156Z /63

R 101934Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8855

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 02 OF 02 MEXICO 04104

PRECISION REPORTING SYSTEM, IF ADOPTED, WOULD GREATLY FACILITATE OTHER ASPECTS OF FIELD OPERATIONS, INCLUDING SEARCH AND RECOVERY OF DOWNED AIRCRAFT, EXPEDITIOUS RESPONSE BY REINFORCEMENTS TO COUNTER HOSTILE ACTIONS, LOCATION OF GROUND TARGETS FOR ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS, AND MORE EFFECTIVE SUPPORT OF MILITARY FORCES INVOLVED IN GROUND OPERATIONS.

9. ACTION REQUESTED: IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WE MUST DECIDE WHETHER TO PROCEED WITH THE MAPPING PROJECT. BEFORE DOING SO, WE SHOULD DETERMINE IF THE ABOVE SUGGESTED SYSTEM IS FEASIBLE, WHAT IT WOULD COST, AND WHETHER IT WOULD COMPLEMENT OR SUBSTITUTE FOR THE 1:50,000 MAPS. OUR FORMER AVIATION ADVISER, JOHN FORD, HAD EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE WITH LORAN APPLICATIONS IN THE MOUNTAINOUS ENVIRONMENT OF SOUTHEAST ASIA AND IS FULLY FAMILIAR WITH THE OPERATION IN MEXICO. WE SUGGEST THAT HE, OR SOMEONEEQUALLY QUALIFIED, BE SENT TO MEXICO SOONEST. LUCEY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NARCOTICS, DRUG CONTROL, MAPPING, COMPUTERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 mar 1978
Decapton Date: 01 jan 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MEXICO04104
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780108-0931
Format: TEL
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780383/aaaacsaw.tel
Line Count: 169
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c4a6acc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3374379
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NARCOTICS - PRECISELY LOCATING ILLICIT CROPS
TAGS: SNAR, MX, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c4a6acc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014